

Record

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2002 SBC — Messengers to the 2002 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) met in the America's Center convention complex in downtown St. Louis. (BP photo by Van Payne)

Baptists to "seek first the King and his Kingdom" through "holy living, sacrificial service, and global witness."

Kingdom Families, an emphasis of the Southern Baptist Council on Family Life, will debut next year during a Kingdom Families Rally in conjunction with the 2003 SBC meeting in Phoenix, Ariz.

Speaking via satellite during the SBC's opening session, President Bush said Southern Baptists are "faithful followers of God and good citizens of America."

Baptists have exerted an extraordinary influence on American history, championing principles of religious tolerance and freedom and "the ideal of a free church in a free state," he added.

"Since the earliest days of our republic, Baptists have been guardians of separation of church and state, preserving the integrity of both," Bush said.

"Yet you never have believed in separating religious faith from political life. Baptists believe, as America's founders did, that religious faith is the moral anchor of American life."

Curry and Mercer, relief workers in Afghanistan who were arrested and accused of sharing their Christian faith with Muslims, spent 105 days in Taliban captivity before being rescued last November by U.S. Special Forces.

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Baptist Children's Village

SBC elects new president; hears Bush

ST. LOUIS (EN) — A new strategic ministry plan and a new convention president were embraced by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in St. Louis on June 11-12.

The convention was punctuated by messages from U.S. President George W. Bush; former Taliban prisoners Dayna Curry and Heather Mercer; and Campus Crusade for Christ founder Bill Bright.

The annual gathering also saw its share of controversy as a speaker at the pre-convention Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference labeled Islam prophet Mohammed a "demon-possessed pedophile," and homosexual activists attempted to disrupt SBC President James Merritt's convention address.

Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church in Plano, Texas, was elected SBC

president, and Paul Pressler, a key architect of the so-called "Conservative Resurgence" in the SBC, was elected first vice president. Both men were unopposed.

Messengers affirmed two major ministry initiatives.

Kingdom Growth" urges

"Muslims don't know that God loves them," Curry said. "We ended up showing the 'Jesus' film, and that's what got us into prison."

The two American women "got caught in the middle of some huge plan of God... so the whole world would pray for Afghanistan like never before," she added.

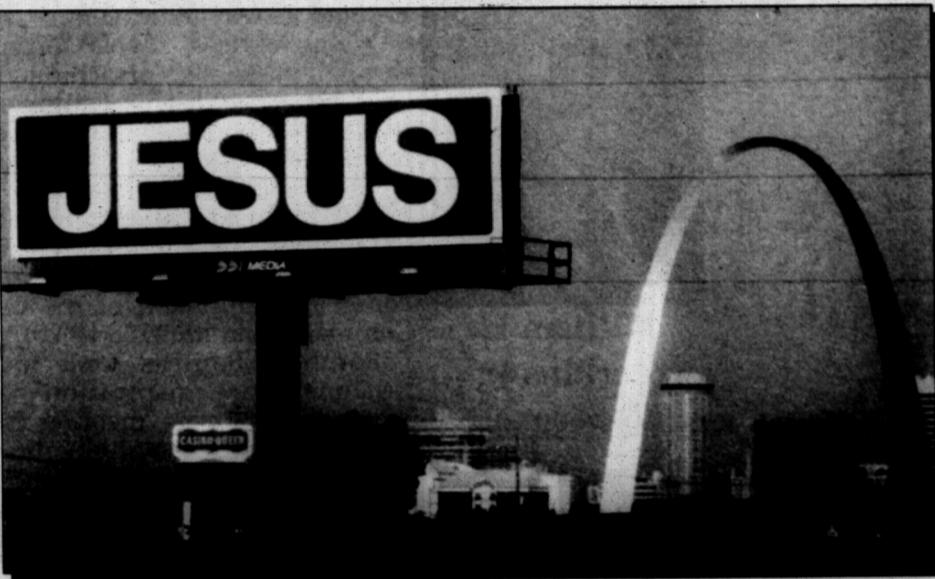
Mercer said her prayer for all Christians "is that we would be people of faith and take God and his word and go for it, no matter what the cost."

Urging Southern Baptists to seek spiritual revival, Bright said the keys to revival are to embrace the cross, die to self, be filled with the Spirit, experience new life, and "walk in the light."

Other convention business during the two-day meeting included:

- referring 10 motions proposed by messengers to various SBC entities for consideration, including two proposals to rescind the requirement that SBC missionaries sign an affirmation of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message statement.

- adopting 10 resolutions addressing such issues as the sexual integrity of ministers,



NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES — Gigantic billboards stating simply, "Jesus," appeared by anonymous means all over St. Louis as the Southern Baptist Convention held its annual meeting in the Gateway city June 11-12, with pre-convention events occurring June 6-10 throughout the St. Louis metro area. (Photo by Bob Carey)

partial-birth abortion, the war on terrorism, and prayer for peace in the Middle East.

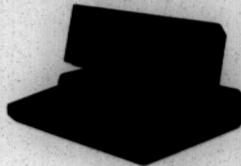
Other motions called for the SBC Executive Committee to recognize and accept gifts from only one convention in each state and urged the North American Mission Board (NAMB) to withdraw chaplaincy endorsement from any ordained female previously endorsed by the board.

This year's SBC annual meeting highlighted the theme, The Highest Power for the Greatest Task, but attracted only 9,609 messengers, the second straight year registration has dipped below 10,000. This year's registration fell 16,000 short of the 25,607 messengers at the 1987 SBC annual meeting — the last time the convention was held in St. Louis.



NEW SBC OFFICERS — Dallas-area pastor Jack Graham (center), new president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), meets with fellow officers elected during the June 11-12 SBC annual meeting in St. Louis. With Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church in Plano, Texas, are (from left) John Yeats, recording secretary and editor of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger; Paul Pressler, first vice president and retired Texas appeals court judge; E.W. McCall Sr., second vice president and pastor in LaPonte, Calif.; and Richard Wells, registration secretary and a Missouri associational director of missions. (BP photo by Augie Boto)

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Dangerous words, for what purpose?

Another annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has adjourned. Held June 11-12 in St. Louis, the 2002 gathering will rank as one of the most poorly attended in the modern SBC era.

With the political struggle for convention control settled — and 500 digital satellite channels and broadband Internet access at home — people just don't turn out for big conventions any longer.

The folks who did show up in St. Louis, however, encountered a true blessing that will be sorely missed among those of us who passed up the opportunity to:

- hear about record-breaking 21st century missions.
- experience beautiful music as it lofted its way to heaven.
- encounter a revival of spirit through passionate preaching.
- renew old friendships and make new friends within our community of believers.

The SBC annual sessions are more than just another convocation of another special interest group (our special interest, of course, being the fulfillment of the Great Commission in Matt. 28:18-20).

Southern Baptists come to the sessions for inspiration and renewal. The vast meeting halls where we gather will likely not again contain so many Bibles until we meet there again. Not least important, Southern Baptists also take care of business during the annual sessions.

As Southern Baptists have grown in numbers and prominence — we are presently the largest Protestant organization on earth — the annual sessions have become the window through which a lost world observes what we say and do.

With the advent of modern communications technology, our words and deeds are each year instantly transmitted to the ends of the earth — literally.

That's one of the reasons we should take such care with our words and deeds for those few two days each year. A lost world is watching, and watching closely. We can speak the truth, and we can speak the truth in love, but we should measure the words that can set back by dozens of years the work of our convention.

Comes now Jerry Vines, former SBC president and pastor of one of the largest churches in the SBC (First Church, Jacksonville, Fla.), speaking at the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference that each year precedes the SBC annual session.

For some reason, Vines in his Pastors' Conference sermon felt it necessary to risk our expansive and successful evangelistic ministries among Muslims by describing their revered prophet Mohammed as a "demon-possessed pedophile," and referring obliquely to Islam as a religion that breeds terrorism.

All of that may be true. Historical records do indicate that Mohammed was betrothed to a six-year-old girl and sexually consummated the relationship three years later. There is also documentation that Mohammed at one point in time apparently considered the prospect that he could be wrestling with demons.

Likewise there is little doubt that radical sects of Islam advocate terrorism, and that enormous amounts of money to fund those sects' dark activities come from "legitimate" sources in the Muslim world.

Still, did Vines have to speak such inflammatory words about a group of people that Southern Baptists are so desperately attempting to reach with the Gospel? Did his harsh words advance the Kingdom work left for us to accomplish?

Vines at 2002 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference

While we understand that Vines does not represent Southern Baptists and was not speaking as part of the official 2002 SBC annual session, the world at large doesn't understand. That lost world received a completely different message from Vines, and on a much larger scale from Southern Baptists and Christians.

Thanks to modern communications technology, Vines' message was heard around the world in a matter of minutes. We can be sure there are many radical Muslim clerics today saying, "See, I told you so," to their impressionable followers.

In this era of mindless terrorism and the destruction of untold thousands of people at the hands of Muslim radicals, Vines has potentially endangered the safety of many Christian missionaries around the world and provided an impetus for extremists to attack those ministries (as if they needed another reason). If you don't believe this can be the case, just watch the nightly news.

The question that must be asked is, for what purpose?

Our grandmothers were right, after all. Some things truly are better left unsaid.

GUEST OPINION: *Now is no time to be hiding*



By Erich Bridges
International Mission Board
Richmond, Va.

is trust in God — and obedience to his command.

"Fear and caution should never dictate how we respond to the Great Commission, or influence us to make our world smaller than the one Jesus died to save," says Bill Cashion, who directs the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) volunteer office. "Terrorism and war do not dictate a believer's job description. We cannot wait to go until the world becomes what we would like it to be — pleasant and safe. If we do, we will never go."

Numerous volunteer mission projects have been canceled, delayed or scaled down since Sept. 11. Some were planned for risky areas, but reservations for "safe" destinations also have taken a major hit, as any travel agent can testify.

Volunteer participation in IMB-related projects through the

first three months of 2002 fell by a third compared to the same period last year, but rebounded somewhat in the spring. By the end of May, 9,555 Southern Baptist volunteers had served overseas, 14% below last year's total of 11,107 for January-May.

However, numerous cancellations have come from teen and college-age volunteers, most of whom serve in the summer. Anticipated participants this summer in International World Changers projects for Southern Baptist youth have fallen to about 600 — little more than half of last year's total. College volunteer numbers are on pace to match (but not surpass) last year.

Young people still want to go on mission, IMB enlistment specialists say, but concerned parents have had second thoughts about their children venturing abroad in dangerous times.

I had the recent privilege, however, of watching a group of parents pray with their college-age children who were preparing to fly to a Muslim country on a volunteer trip.

Tears flowed from several parents' eyes as the young adults departed, but they were tears of excitement and joy, not anxiety.

A retired volunteer leaving in June to do relief work in a violent part of the Middle East is just as excited:

"I want to go and in some way spread the gospel and help out," he said. "It's something I can do, so you say, 'God, why shouldn't I do this?' They may not like us a lot over there, but hopefully we can show them God's love through what we do."

The post-Cold War world is shaping up to be a violent and confusing place, with bewildering alliances, shape-shifting enemies, rapid fragmentation of old empires. So what else is new, besides the speed of change?

History has known many such times.

"What is important is not the state of the world," Cashion says. "What is important is the state of our understanding of who Jesus is, and who we are — his ministers and witnesses."

President addresses meeting via satellite

ST. LOUIS (EN) — God will praise Southern Baptists as "good and faithful servants," U.S. President George W. Bush predicted in an address broadcast by satellite to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting June 11.

During a 12-minute broadcast, Bush repeatedly expressed his appreciation for Southern Baptists. Messengers reciprocated with repeated applause, giving him a standing ovation when he concluded.

Bush marveled that the SBC has grown to about 16 million members. Historically, Baptists have included early American religious liberty pioneer Roger Williams, as well as evangelist Billy Graham, "a man who has played such an important role in nurturing my faith," Bush said.

Southern Baptists also have counted among their number U.S. presidents, such as Harry Truman, he added — not mentioning the two most recent Southern Baptist presidents, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton.

Baptists have exerted an extraordinary influence on American history, championing principles of religious tolerance and freedom and "the ideal of a free church in a free state," the president said.

"The Baptist form of church government was a model of democracy, even before the founding of America.

"Baptists understood the deep truth of what Rev. Martin Luther King said: 'The church is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state,'" he said.

"Since the earliest days of our republic, Baptists have been guardians of separation of church and state, preserving the integrity of both. Yet you never have believed in separating religious faith from political life.



A MISSISSIPPI GREETING — Mississippi native Jerry Rankin (right), president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) International Mission Board, greets Allen Stephens, missions director for Rankin Association in Brandon, during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions, held at St. Louis' Radisson Hotel the weekend before the annual meeting of the SBC. (BP photo by Sandy King)

"Baptists believe, as America's founders did, that religious faith is the moral anchor of American life. Throughout history, people of faith have often been our nation's voice of conscience.

"We all know men and women can be good without faith and also know that faith is an incredibly important source of goodness in our country," he said.

The president emphasized the importance of implementing faith. "Faith without works is dead," he said, citing the seventh verse of the second chapter of the New Testament book of James.

"Our democratic government is one way to promote social justice and the common good, which is why the Southern Baptist Convention has become such a powerful voice for some of the great issues of our time," he said.

Bush listed a litany of those issues his administration holds in common with the SBC.

"We believe in fostering a culture of life and that marriage and family are sacred institutions that should be preserved and strengthened," he said to sustained applause. "We believe a life is a creation, and children are gifts to be loved and protected, not products to be designed and manufactured by human cloning.

"We believe that protecting human dignity and promoting human rights should be the center of America's foreign policy.

"We believe that our government should view the good people who work in faith-based charities as partners, not rivals," he added.

"We believe that days of discriminating against religious institutions simply because they are religious must come to an end."

He championed concepts of civility and tolerance toward "humans beings created in the divine image."

"Yet you also know that civility does not require us to abandon deeply held beliefs," he said. "Civility and firm resolve can live easily with one another."

Bush noted faith propels people to care for others in need and affirmed his audience's response to that challenge.

"For some people, Jesus' admonition to care for the least of these is an admirable moral

teaching, (but) for many Baptists, it is a way of life," he asserted. Faith also provides comfort during times of grief, he said, stressing that truth has become much more evident in the wake of Sept. 11, when people across the nation and around the world turned to prayer and found power in faith.

Bush observed Americans have held to important faith-born truths, "that suffering is temporary, that hope is eternal and that the ruthless will not inherit the earth.

"Our faith teaches us that while weeping may endure for a night, joy comes in the morning," he said, "and while faith will not make our path easy, it will give us strength for the journey ahead."

On a personal note, he thanked Southern Baptists for their prayers on his behalf. "Many of you have prayed for my family and me," he said.



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THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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Miss. sends 463 to SBC

ST. LOUIS (BP) — Missouri Baptists placed the largest number of messengers, 1,278, of the 9,609 who attended the June 11-12 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in the America's Center in St. Louis. Other leading states were Tennessee with 836, North Carolina with 728, Georgia with 686 and Illinois with 609, according to unofficial figures compiled by the SBC's registration secretary, Lee Porter, from the 145th session of the 157-year-old convention. Last year's final registration in New Orleans was 9,561. For St. Louis, unofficial state-by-state registration numbers are: Alabama, 540; Alaska, 8; Arizona, 41; Arkansas, 405; California, 94; Colorado, 47; Connecticut, 6; Delaware, 2; District of Columbia, 8; Florida, 504; Georgia, 686; Hawaii, 12; Idaho, 7; Illinois, 609; Indiana, 129; Iowa, 38; Kansas, 81; Kentucky, 567; Louisiana, 256; Maine, 1; Maryland, 71; Massachusetts, 3; Michigan, 47; Mississippi, 463; Missouri, 1,278; Montana, 2; Nebraska, 7; Nevada, 27; New Hampshire, 4; New Jersey, 15; New Mexico, 60; New York, 38; North Carolina, 728; North Dakota, 1; Ohio, 155; Oklahoma, 286; Oregon, 14; Pennsylvania, 33; Rhode Island, 1; South Carolina, 429; South Dakota, 2; Tennessee, 836; Texas, 568; Utah, 21; Virginia, 377; Washington, 15; West Virginia, 53; Wisconsin, 9; and Wyoming, 9. The territory of Puerto Rico had 5 messengers attending. Two states, Minnesota and Vermont, had no registered messengers. The largest number of churches represented in a state also came from Missouri, with 405. Other leading states were Tennessee with 350, North Carolina with 332, Georgia with 274 and Kentucky with 248.

Looking back

10 years ago

Ed Young, newly elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention, said its time to "put down the guns and go fishing again." Young was elected at the 135th Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis.

20 years ago

At a press conference following his election as Southern Baptist Convention president in New Orleans, Jimmy Draper says that the various factions among Southern Baptists need to begin "talking to each other instead of about each other."

50 years ago

An estimated crowd of 7,000 sat in Tiger Stadium in Jackson under a 90-degree sun to hear and see the renowned evangelist Billy Graham open his Greater Jackson Crusade. "Unless we have an old-fashioned, heaven-sent revival, our generation is doomed," he said.

WMU challenged to plug into God's vision

Nominations deadline nearing

July 8 is the deadline for submitting nominations to fill trustee and board member positions on the commissions and boards of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

According to Aubrey Boone, chairman of the Committee on Nominations and a member of First Church, Winona, a limited number of vacancies will be filled on:

- Board of Ministerial Education.
- Christian Action Commission.
- Mississippi Baptist Foundation.
- Education Commission.
- Historical Commission.
- Baptist Children's Village.
- Baptist Health Systems, Inc. (Jackson).
- Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc. (Memphis).
- Blue Mountain College.
- Mississippi College.
- William Carey College.
- Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

The Committee on Nominations will work in conjunction with the heads of institutions and agencies to bring a list of nominees to be approved by messengers to the 2002 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention at First Church, Jackson, on October 29-30.

Nomination forms can be obtained by contacting the MBCB Executive Director's Office, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3201 or toll free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 201. E-mail: bbox@mcb.org.

ST. LOUIS (EN) — Forgiveness is powerful but not easy, a victim of kidnapping and rape told participants in the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) annual meeting June 9-10.

Debbie Morris, author of the book, *Forgiving the Dead Man Walking*, captivated the audience in two presentations to the WMU meeting, held prior to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting in St. Louis.

Morris was kidnapped and raped multiple times over a 30-hour period when she was 16. The Death Row story of one of her abductors, Robert Lee Willie, was portrayed in the movie, *Dead Man Walking*.

Forgiving the man who traumatized her took years, Morris testified. "Jesus says we are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Sometimes that is easier said than done. Some people are downright unlovable."

Forgiving the man who later would die in the electric chair was the only way to free herself from the relentless emotional torture with which she dealt on a daily basis, Morris reported.

She said she found forgiveness was the path to escape the bitterness, fear, and depression that had engulfed her.

Once an honor student, Morris dropped out of high school and turned to alcohol. She thought once her attacker was convicted she would feel better, but she did not. Then she hoped his execution would lift her burden, but she realized that would not free her either.

"I learned the hard way that sometimes there is no justice here on earth for some of the things we experience," she said. "Sometimes there is no resolution."

As she waited for the execution, Morris cried out to God for help. She asked God to reveal himself to her again.

"I needed God's healing and needed to



Morris

experience God's grace," she said. "I asked God to help me forgive this man. ... I needed to be able to completely forgive because I needed to be completely forgiven," Morris said.

She discovered forgiveness is something that must be given freely to others even when they don't deserve it, "just as God forgives us even though we could never deserve or earn it," she said.

"Robert Lee Willie did not benefit because I forgave him. He got death that night, but I got new life."

Forgiveness, Morris said, is required of God's people and takes courage and faith.

WMU participants also heard a faith challenge from Henry Blackaby, author of *Experiencing God*.

Calling for a "highway of holiness" from the nation's churches, he told the women America's turmoil springs from the failure of church leaders to trust God totally.

"God permits things, but never maliciously or arbitrarily," he said. "The primary message of 9/11 was to God's people: I am beginning to remove the hedge of protection from America because of the sin of my people."

Church leaders are far from where God intends them to be, and God has a right to expect a greater impact from God's people, Blackaby said.

"God is saying to his people in North America: 'Given the Resurrection, Pentecost, and the blood of my Son, I hold you accountable for making a difference in the nation.'"

Blackaby urged Christians to develop a deeper commitment to God and to pray for a movement of the spirit of God to sweep across the nation.

In her report, WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee offered glimpses of how God is using WMU. Organization is vital to WMU work, she said. "Mission understanding in our congregations is not going to happen without organization. Once we are aware, once we learn of need, we become involved."

As church WMU organizations keep women informed, inspired and challenged, congregations discover ways to become personally involved in missions, Lee said.

Lee specifically highlighted WMU outreach through Christian Women's Job Corps, a ministry to help women get off welfare and into the work force that is marking its fifth anniversary.

She also expressed appreciation for Acteens, WMU's mission education program for teenage girls. She encouraged support for Syncronations, the 2003 National Acteens Convention to be held in Nashville.

Sandy Wisdom-Martin, executive director of the Illinois Baptist Convention's WMU, presented a plaque to Lee in celebration of 10 years of the



MISSISSIPPIAN AT WMU — Jennifer Lynn Martin, an Acteen from Stonewall, gives her testimony entitled, *What Acteens Means to Me*, during the annual national meeting of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) June 9-10 in the Ferrara Theater of St. Louis' America's Center. (BP photo by Justin Veneman)

Mississippi River Ministry, which involves several state conventions along the Delta regions of the river. She announced that more than 3,000 people have made professions of faith in Christ as a direct result of the ministry.

WMU President Janet Hoffman, who was re-elected during the meeting, challenged Baptist women to do the best they can with what they have because it is God's plan.

"God had a plan, and he still has a plan," Hoffman said, noting God's plan book is the Bible. God's plan is purposeful, practical, and personal, Hoffman explained. Referring to John 3:16 and Matt. 28:19-20, she said God's purpose is to bring all people everywhere into God's redemptive love.

"According to the plan book, God's strategy for accomplishing his purpose is to use people to share his message of love," she said, drawing on Phil. 3:7-10 and 1 Peter 1:2.

While the Bible spotlights heroes, those who work behind the scenes make the difference, Hoffman declared. "Ordinary folk make great contributions. Most of the work carried on in the church then and now is done by plain vanilla folks."

Hoffman interviewed Bob Reccord, president of the North American Mission Board (NAMB), and his wife, Cheryl.

Reccord testified of his difficult childhood and how God drew him to a deeper commitment through a campus minister who kept telling him, "Bob, God loves you right where you are, but he loves you too much to let you stay there."

Cheryl Reccord described her own struggle during her college years when she was about to drop out of church life. A fellow student befriended her and explained to her how to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The WMU conference also included testimonies from SBC missionaries who serve at home and abroad.



WMU MEETS — Janet Hoffman, national president of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), presides during the second day of the WMU's annual national meeting, themed, "God's Plan ... My Part," held June 9-10 in the Ferrara Theater of St. Louis' America's Center. Hoffman, from Bernice, La., just completed her second year as national president. (BP photo by Van Payne)

SIN CLINIC

Recently, while driving through one of our Mississippi towns after a speaking engagement, I saw a sign that just stopped me and made me blink and think. The sign said, "Mississippi Sin Clinic." At least that is what I thought it said and that is what I read that it said. I knew that sin seemed to be growing by leaps and bounds across our state, but I did not know that they were putting on clinics and advertising the fact. I wondered to myself who was teaching and what they were teaching at this "Mississippi Sin Clinic." I did not stop and go in, but as I eased along, the reflection of the light on the sign changed and I saw the rest of the lettering — it actually read "Mississippi Sinus Clinic."

Later, as I reflected on the sign, I thought about how that is probably what every one of our churches is supposed to be: "Sin Clinics." Not clinics to teach people how to sin, but to warn them of the severity of sin. We may not hear as much about sin today as in generations gone by, but it is no less dangerous, no less destructive,



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

no less deceitful, and no less deadly than it has ever been. These verses are still in the Bible and they are also seen everywhere in our world: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23). "And when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15).

So what should we be teaching in our "Mississippi Sin Clinics?"

• **Sin breaks** — Any and every sin you want to name and investigate, it breaks. It breaks relationships. It breaks and shatters dreams. It breaks worthy accomplishments. It

breaks hearts. Sometimes sin is pictured in a light as though God has picked out a few things that he does not want us to do simply because he knows that we would have fun and enjoy them. Not so! God knows that whatever sin looks like, however much initial pleasure is received, that ultimately the bitter dregs of wrongdoing will begin to flow through our veins. He is not trying to take good things away from us, instead he is warning us about the bad things!

• **Jesus takes** — This is the glorious news of the Gospel, that God sent his Son Jesus to the world. Jesus went to the cross and there every one of the sins of every one of us was placed on him. He who had never sinned took all of my sin

upon himself. Jesus takes my sin. He pays the penalty for me. Jesus takes.

• **God remakes** — The wonderful message that we have been given is salvation's beautiful song that God can remove our sins and remake us. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away and behold all things are new." When we put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we can be remade and sin does not have the final word or the ultimate victory. Jesus has the final word and Jesus holds the final victory for us!

I especially love that verse in the song, *It is Well With My Soul*, that says:

"My sin-oh, the bliss of this glorious tho': My sin not in part, but the whole

Is nail'd to the cross and I bear it no more,

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, Oh my soul!"

All across our state let's set up the clinics, let's open the doors, and let's welcome in the burdened and broken and tell them there is **Good News** — Jesus forgives, removes, and has conquered sin!

Postage hike leads to increase

Due to the large postal rate increases scheduled to go into effect July 1, it will become necessary to raise the price of *The Baptist Record* two cents per issue per subscription beginning with the first billing in July, according to Editor William H. Perkins Jr. The net effect will be an increase of \$1 annually per subscription.

Perkins stressed that the increase will go directly to postage costs and is not an increase in the base price of a subscription.

"We have held the line on the base price of a subscription for more than 10 years, and we have absorbed all but one increase in postage costs over the same period. The size of the postage increase this time, however, was just too much for the budget to bear," he said.

Perkins pointed out that even with the postage increase, the cost of subscribing to *The Baptist Record* remains among the lowest in the "old line" states of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We pledge to continue to make *The Baptist Record* the lowest-cost, highest-quality publication we can in pursuit of our mutual goal of helping to bring Mississippi and the world to Jesus," he said.

Pages sacrifice summer week to serve at SBC

ST. LOUIS (BP) — While most students spend their summers taking part-time jobs or hanging out at the beach, one group of Southern Baptist students sacrifices a week of vacation for the sake of service to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting.

Each year, 20-25 pages attend the SBC for the purpose of ensuring the smooth operation of all aspects of the convention. The pages are an elite group of Challengers and Acteens representing several state Baptist conventions.

Mississippi has a long history of providing pages for the annual meeting, including National Acteens Panelist Jennifer Lynn Martin of Stonewall.

An integral part of the inner workings of the annual meeting, pages have had numerous duties over the past 40 years since the program started. In the early 1960s, a few young men assisted with duties for the platform personnel; by the 1980s, the young men and women were regularly assisting the registration process, including a convention that swelled to more than 40,000 messengers.

Veteran SBC registration secretary Lee Porter has supervised pages in registration since 1963 and is an advocate for the program as an opportunity for service, education about the convention, spiritual development, and grooming future SBC leaders.

Today, page responsibilities include delivering messages and motions to the platform from the convention floor, assisting SBC officials and media representatives, and working with the Resolutions Committee and recording secretary. Pages are most visible on the convention floor during general sessions as they literally "run" motions from microphone locations to the president on the platform.

"I have always been very grateful for the pages, because without them, I fear I would have had to run motions to the platform myself," said Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern Seminary and a former SBC president.

Page duties were expanded in 2002 to assist select exhibitors in the SBC exhibit hall.

Steve Nelson, of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, praised the enthusiasm of the pages as "invaluable to our efforts to promote the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund and BEAT Hunger Weekends.

"Their zeal for the Lord's work makes them a tremendous help," Nelson said. "No doubt, the SBC annual meeting could not function with such great efficiency were it not for the handiwork of these fine young men and women."

Some state conventions, such as South Carolina and Texas, have long-standing traditions of sending pages, while others, such as the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists, are relative newcomers. Challenger pages are nominated to the North American Mission Board by their state conventions while Acteens National Panelists serve as pages on behalf of the Woman's Missionary Union.

States represented by pages at the 2002 SBC included Georgia, North and South Carolina, Texas, Mississippi, Michigan, Missouri, and New Mexico, as well as Alberta, Canada.

The evolving SBC page program is representative of the latest Southern Baptist trend of revitalizing traditional youth mission education organizations. Both Challengers and Acteens have been in a process of redefinition since the late '90s, with the "new Challengers" being launched in 2000. The Acteens redesign by the WMU is expected to be complete within the next year. The page experience has gone beyond a utility service to convention workers to an "on-mission" endeavor involving the students in Crossover and personal evangelism opportunities.

Pages attend the SBC expecting long hours, hard work and little recognition, according to Wanda Lee, of the 2002 annual session of the Southern Baptist WMU executive director.

"The young women and men who serve as pages at the Southern Baptist Convention provide an invaluable service. The primary responsibility of these volunteers is to be available and to assist the convention whenever needed. They are vital behind the scenes as they run errands for convention officials and aid in emergency situations."



UNDER THE ARCH — Mark Martin (left) minister of evangelism for Roaring Fork Church, Gatlinburg, Tenn., hands out gospel tracts in downtown St. Louis during the Crossover evangelism effort prior to the start of the 2002 annual session of the Southern Baptist Convention. (BP photo by Bob Carey)

JUST FOR THE RECORD



RAs of First Church Hazlehurst

VBS dates

Gatesville, Crystal Springs: July 8-12; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; toddlers through high school; commencement, July 14; celebration party, July 20.

Paynes, Charleston: June 24-28; 6-8 p.m.; age 4 through 6th grade; for additional information, call Julie Denley at (662) 647-2884.

Lakeshore, Jackson: June 23-29; 6-8:30 p.m.; Joe Crout, pastor; for additional information, call the church office at (601) 373-6677.

VBS celebration concert with Jeff Slaughter of Nashville, Tenn., will be held at **First Church, Brandon**, June 28 at 6:30 p.m. For additional information, call the church office at (601) 825-8003.

Homecomings

Gatesville, Crystal Springs: June 23; Phil Mullins, former pastor, speaker; dinner in fellowship hall following morning service.

Philadelphia, Caseyville: June 23; Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; worship, 10:45 a.m.; covered dish lunch in fellowship hall; Matt Buckles, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, guest speaker.

Paynes, Charleston: July 14; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; and noon meal in the Family Life Center; Todd Hill, West Virginia, guest speaker; Tommy Tanner, pastor.

Wedding vow renewal service was recently held at Spring Hill Church, Marshall County. Don Stanfill, mission director for Lafayette/Marshall Association, led the ceremony. Nineteen couples (pictured) participated.

RAs of First Church, Hazlehurst, recently held their awards ceremony. Pictured (from left, front row) are Wynn Watson, Phillip Douglas, Reece Hankins,

Joshua Scruggs, Clay Price, Will Davis, Hank Jordan, Bryan Jones, Jeremy Newman, Joseph Miller, Latham Pyron, and Bryan Davidson; (from left, back row) are John Coates, Rollin Turnage, Randy

Hankins, and Jerry Keywood, leaders. Not pictured were Brodie Jackson, Jacob Fischer,



Spring Hill Church wedding renewal service

Billy Henley, Bradley Sharp, Bryce Guess, Nick Lambert, Eric Lowenkamp, Alex Guess, Timothy Hallman, and Bryce Sharp. Robert Hanvey is pastor.

(from left, front row) are Grace Bozeman, Lauren Watson, Brooke Wilson, Brittney Newman; (back row) Virginia Little and Cathryn Cartwright.



GAs of First Church Hazlehurst

GAs of First Church, Hazlehurst, recently held their awards ceremony. Pictured,

Leaders are Becky Bozeman, Trace Fischer, and Sherry Davis. Robert M. Hanvey is pastor.

Visit the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board on the World Wide Web at:
www.mbc.org



REVIVAL DATES

County Line (Attala): June 23-26; 7 p.m.; Mark Wicker, evangelist; Robbie Robinson, music; James Burrell, pastor.

Harperville (Scott): June 23-26; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner on the grounds, and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Travis Gray, evangelist; Tal Vardaman, music; Don Q. Wilson, pastor.

Faith, Silver Creek: June 23-26; Sunday, 11 a.m., noon meal, and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. meal 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. service; Paul Medley, speaker; Chris Turnage, music.

New Ireland, Union: June 28-30; Saturday, 7 p.m.; Sunday, lunch and 1 p.m. service with Steve Mayes preaching.

Corinth, Purvis: June 21-23; Friday and Saturday services, 7 p.m. at the church; Sunday services, 11 a.m. at the church and 6 p.m. at Little Black Creek Water Park with the annual church picnic at 5 p.m. Ed Jenkins, Bogalusa, La., visiting pastor; David Streck, pastor.

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC sought by church averaging 110 in Sunday School. Please e-mail resume to mwsjgb@vicksburg.com or fax to (601) 636-7574 or mail to Calvary Baptist Church, 2878 Old Hwy. 27, Vicksburg, MS 39180.

BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC/YOUTH: Hebron Baptist Church is looking for a bi-vocational minister of music/youth. Please send resume to: Hebron Baptist Church, 16 Hebron Church Road, Soso, MS 39480.

RURAL CHURCH located 25 miles north of Jackson, is seeking a part-time minister of music. Primary responsibilities will include music direction during mid-week rehearsals, regular church worship ser-

vices, and special music/drama presentations during the year. Send resumes to: MUSIC COUNCIL, P.O. Box 67, Benton, MS 39040.

NORTHWEST BAPTIST ASSOCIATION is seeking a God-called man, seminary trained, to serve in the ministry of Program Development and Education for our association. All interested individuals need to address their inquiries to Rev. John L. Perkins, Association Missions Director, P.O. Box 381, Hernando, MS 38632.

HIGH HILL BAPTIST CHURCH, 10021 Road 206, Philadelphia, Miss., 39350 is seeking a bi-vocational minister of music for Sunday morning and night services. Send resume to the above address, ATTN: Music Committee.

Free Resource!

Planning Financial Support Of ministers and church employees.

A workbook to help churches develop pay and benefit plans for ministers and church employees.



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Gulfshore Baptist Assembly • July 25-27



Higher Faith Quartet
leading Friday evening
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- *Teaching and training for the whole family: preschool, children, youth and adults*
- *Hear Speakers Tournament winners*
- *See demonstration Bible drill*
- *Recreational activities include:*
 - Beachfront swimming
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 - The beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast surrounding the assembly grounds

Mississippi churches and families can make
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For info about program, call Don Hicks at
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Gulfshore Baptist Assembly
Pass Christian

No More Playing Dress-Up... It's a Matter of the Heart.

2002 Discipleship Training Directors Dinner and Workshop

**From the Basics to the Advanced
Get a Grip on Your Ministry!**

July 12

FBC, New Albany
6:00-8:00 p.m.

FBC, Crystal Springs
6:00-8:00 p.m.

July 13

Gulfshore Baptist
Assembly
Pass Christian
6:00-8:00 p.m.

No Cost for this Event, But Reservations are Required!

Sponsored by the
Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

"...Man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart."

1 Samuel 16:7

**With every breath,
with every song...
I praise You!**

Gulfshore MUSIC Leadership Conference

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, July 11-13, 2002
100 First Street • Pass Christian, MS
(228) 452-7261

Registration begins at 1:30 p.m.

COST: "A" Unit - \$92

"C" Unit - \$83

Handbell Audition: 3 p.m.

Sponsored by the Church Music Department
L. Graham Smith, Director

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
Jim Futral, Executive Director-Treasurer

Preregistration Form Discipleship Training Directors Workshop

Name _____
Day Phone Number _____
Mailing Address _____
City _____ St _____ Zip _____
Church _____
Association _____

I serve as:

Associational Missions Director
 Associational Discipleship Training Director
 Discipleship Training Director
 Pastor
 Minister of Education
 Other

I will attend the workshop at:

FBC, New Albany
 FBC, Crystal Springs
 Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

**Preregister
by
July 29
2002**

Complete and return to the Discipleship and Family Ministry
Department, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205

Contact information:

Mississippi Baptist Convention Board
Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205
1-800-748-1651 or (601) 968-3800 locally
Fax: (601) 714-7432

Mississippi Baptist Youth Night 2002

Mississippi Coliseum, Jackson
Friday, July 19, 2002 • 6:30-9:00 p.m.



David Nasser
Speaker

Exit 10
Worship Leaders

Plan Now to Bring Your Church Youth Group



Sponsored by the Evangelism Department
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Single Again Conference

Saturday, June 22, 2002

Bethel Baptist Church, Monticello

Conferences:

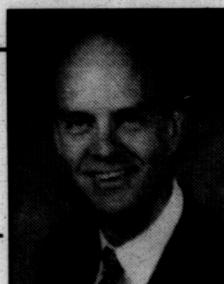
Widowhood – Farley Earnest, Brandon

Divorce – James Haynes, FBC, Biloxi

Minister of Singles, Counselor

Single-Parenting – Wayne Hudson

VanCleave, Author



Keynote Speaker Ron Mumbower

Family Counselor, FBC, Jackson

Cost: \$10, payable at the door.

For directions and information call 601-587-4661



Sunday School Directors Discipleship Training Directors Dinner and Workshop

**From the Basics to the Advanced
Get a Grip on Your Ministry!**

Tuesday, August 6, 2002
State Boulevard Baptist Church
Meridian, Miss.
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 13, 2002
Emmanuel Baptist Church
Grenada, Miss.
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

No Cost for this Event
But Reservations are Required!

Pastor and Wife Retreat

August 8-10, 2002
Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

Leaders

Glen Putnam is the pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Jonesboro, Ark., and former staff counselor for Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis. His doctoral research was on ministry marriages. He is well-qualified to guide our retreat because of his vast pastoral ministry, extensive counseling experiences and support to ministers and their families.

Steve Walker, music evangelist from Pinola, will lead music in our worship times.

Purpose

To provide a time of encouragement, inspiration and fellowship for pastors and wives.

Childcare

Supervised care will be made available for preschoolers, children and youth.

Cost

2 nights lodging and 6 meals:

- **Adults:** \$90 per person
- **Ages 12 & up:** \$53.25 per person
- **Ages 2-11:** \$31.65 per person
- **Age 2 and under:** no cost

There is no conference fee.

Scholarships

Scholarships of \$50 per pastor are available.

For more information

Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Dept.
Matt Buckles, director – Kelib Gordon, consultant

Kay McDonnell, ministry assistant
1 (800) 748-1651 or (601) 292-3305

This workshop is designed for the Discipleship Training director, the Sunday School director, pastor, minister of education, and associational missions director to learn more about the importance of the Discipleship and Sunday School ministries.

Participants will learn the principles of visionary leadership, along with specifics on how to plan and implement an effective Discipleship and Sunday School ministry in your church.

A meal will be served at no charge. The workshop will follow.

Reservations are required by July 29.

Sunday School Department or Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205, 1 (800) 748-1651 or (601) 968-3800 locally. Fax: (601) 714-7430

You may register online at www.mbc.org on the Sunday School Department home page.

Sponsored by the Sunday School Department and the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and LifeWay Christian Resources

Pray this day for...

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone (601) 292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1 (800) 787-7729 (PRAY)

“Those who walk with God always reach their destination.”

Charles Stanley

For: (1) Adopt-an-Annuitant Sunday (CMR & Annuity Emphasis); (2) Pray that the city-wide rally among the youth of Chimoio in Mozambique will challenge them to choose a lifestyle of sexual purity. Pray for the leaders of these youth to be faithful in their own abstinence commitments.

For: (1) Citizenship & Religious Liberty (CAC Emphasis); (2) Workers in Sri Lanka asked you to pray for the election of Sri Lanka Baptist Sangamaya (SLBS, the national convention) president last August. The elections were held and the president is now in office. Pray for unity among all the leaders in SLBS.

Ask the Lord to halt the escalation of conflict between Palestine and Israel and between Pakistan and India. Ask Him to direct events in both places in ways that will increase the opportunity for people on all sides of the conflict to personally know and follow Christ.

For: (1) GA Camp; Garaywa, 24 - 28 (WMU); (2) Royal Ambassador/Challenger Camp, Central Hills, Kosciusko, 24 - 28 (MM); (3) Please pray today for President Fidel Castro Ruz of Cuba (Caribbean Sea).

For: (1) Children's Bible Drill Camp, Central Hills, Kosciusko, 1 - 3 (D&FM); (2) Family Enrichment Conference, Gulfshore, 1-5 (D&FM); (3) Pray for the rapid growth of the Kingdom of God among the 2 million Yao people of Malawi, Mozambique and Tanzania.

For: (1) GA Camp & Actees Camp Garaywa, 8 - 12; (WMU); (2) Royal Ambassador/Challenger Camp, Central Hills Kosciusko, 8 - 12 (MM); (3) Pray for those who are working in prison ministries throughout Mississippi. They help many inmates come to know Christ.

For: (1) Heartsong '02, Gulfshore, 25 - 29, (CM); (2) More than 62 percent of all Chinese residents over the age of four listen to radio. Pray for great wisdom to all who work in Christian radio programming for China. Pray that through the messages presented many millions of Chinese will come to Christ this year.

In Chiangklang, Thailand, ISC worker Maggie Hanson has started the "Solid Rock," a weekly English hangout to reach youth. Every week, many teenagers come to the Baptist church to practice their English, play games, listen to contemporary Christian music and attend Bible studies. Pray they will see God's truth.

Thank you for praying for the families of the victims of Mozambique's May 25 train accident in which 200 people were killed. ISC worker, Gil Santhon, writes: "On May 28, the mortuary director decided to put 20 caskets together outside and have one service. I preached and Christian ladies sang. Pray for many others in critical condition in this area."

God is at work in a Moscow, Russia, school. A team of volunteers taught in their areas of expertise, shared their faith in Christ, and boldly lifted up the name of Jesus in the school. Many students and teachers heard the Gospel for the first time. Pray for a true spiritual hunger and desire by them to study God's Word.

For: (1) Baptist Building Staff AT HOME DAYS, 3 - 5; (2) Pray for Asheninka men of Peru who recently attended a chronological Bible storytelling retreat. Pray that they will be motivated to tell the Bible's story, have plenty of listeners, and impact the people of their villages for Christ.

David Cardoza, church planter and pastor in Elberton, Ga. with Hispanics, asks for special prayer for his family because the ministry is so demanding that it is difficult to keep priorities straight and to balance responsibilities. Pray for him and his wife, Linda, concerning day-to-day ministry needs that strain the marriage.

There are many decisions and logistics to work through that must fall into place to be able to mobilize all of the resources that are now available for Afghanistan. Pray for insight and wisdom for strategy coordinators as they make decisions. Pray for all the logistics concerning their work.

For: (1) Independence Day; (2) Pray for the personnel at the N.Y. state convention and the D.C. state convention who are in the middle of our national crisis. Also pray for Ken Welborn, missionary to the United Nations, and Jack Branson, FBI agent.

For: (1) Music Leadership Conference, Gulfshore, 11 - 13 (CM); (2) Pray for mission volunteers who are serving in a number of overseas countries and also in many areas of the United States this summer.

For: (1) Lad/Dad Weekend Camp, Central Hills, Kosciusko (MM); (2) Young Musicians' Conference, Gulfshore (CM); (3) Andy DeGuire is on the student evangelism team in Toledo, Ohio. His wife, Heidi, unexpectedly delivered their little son at 20 weeks and he has gone to be with the Lord. Please pray for grace to face the days ahead.

Pray that Jiangxi's Governor Huang Zhiqian, appointed in April 2001, would recognize the positive contributions being made in China's development by Christians.

For: (1) All-State Youth Choir & Orchestra Rehearsal Camp & Tour, William Carey College, 5 - 13 (CM); (2) Pray that all citizens of the U.S. will be alert against current threats of terrorists and do all we can to prevent future attacks of any kind.

Pray for the development of local leaders to carry on the work in new Criollo churches of Northern Argentina. Criollos often do not accept one of their own as a leader. Pray that the Holy Spirit will change attitudes as God's Word is taught.

The Kampala Urban Team in Uganda writes: "We have about 15 who meet faithfully every Wednesday night for an in-depth Bible study with one of our missionaries. Most are young men! Please pray for them as they study the deep truths about God."

For: (1) Centrifuge, Gulfshore, 6 - 11 (LCR/SBC); (2) Violent crime is a major problem in the Johannesburg area of South Africa. Recently, one of the missionaries was shot at as she went out of her house to greet a member of her Bible study. Pray for the safety of missionaries there.

BAPTIST HYMNA NEEDED FOR AFRICAN SEMINARY

The only seminary in Africa offering a graduate degree in church music is in Ogbomosho, Nigeria. Currently, most African church choirs sing only the melody of hymns from memory, for they have only the words without music.

Jimmy McCaleb, Church Music Department consultant, after teaching a course at this seminary, has a burden to provide our fellow Baptist musicians in Africa with 5,000 copies of the 1991 Baptist Hymnal. Their choirs could then proclaim the theology of our Baptist faith in beautiful four-part harmony! As of August 2001, 3,000 hymnals have been given and sent.

You can help with a financial gift. One hymnal is \$5. A box of 20 is \$100. If you or your church group would like to participate in this ministry, please call Jimmy McCaleb at (601) 292-3273, 1 (800) 748-1651 or E-mail him at jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

Checks may be made out to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and mailed to:

Jimmy McCaleb
MBCB
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205

THE BAPTIST HYMNAL

1-91
JESSE S. BUSH
Parents: Karl & Lena Bush
Community Outreach

6-83
AUDRA C. FUNDERBURK
Parents: Rickey & Lori Funderburk
Administrative Associate

20-00
BENTON E. HEWITT, III
Parents: Earl & Ramona Hewitt
Medicine

28-86
ROSS E. FUNDERBURK
Parents: Rickey & Lori Funderburk
Administrative Associate

31-82
MARK W. HENDRICKS
Parents: Larry & Mary Hendricks
General Evangelism



Take a moment to send a card to encourage the children of our missionaries!

For security, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to:

Child's name and
parent's name
International Mission Board
P.O. Box 6767
Richmond, VA 23230-8767

JUST FOR THE RECORD

The deaf ministry of **First Church, Pascagoula**, was recognized during the morning service on May 12 for 50 years of ministering to the deaf individuals. Rex Yancey, pastor, recognized special guests Mollie Barron, a former Sunday School teacher and widow of T. H. Barron, a leader in the church; Don Barron, Mollie's son and a former interpreter; and Sybil McCoy, widow of C. C. McCoy, a former interpreter. Pictured (from left) are McCoy, Yancey, and Barron.



McCoy, Yancey, and Barron

I Love America Celebration will be held at **Colonial Heights Church**, Jackson, June 30. The times are 8:30 a.m., 9:45 a.m., and 11 a.m. An inspirational testimony will be given by Sujo John, survivor of the World Trade Center. For additional information, call the church office at (601) 956-5000.

Youth of Ludlow Church, Scott Association, held a car wash on April 20 to raise \$615 for their trip to Gulfshore Assembly.

Sonshine Hands, the puppet team of Goss Church, Columbia, has been traveling to churches sharing the gospel. Members pictured (from left, front row) are Constance Bass, Taylor Davis, Courtney McArthur, Melanie Saucier, and Trista Cooper; (back row) Ashley Pounds, Hunter King, Colby Pounds, Derek Williamson, Gannon Pierce, and Kim Fortenberry.

Ginger Pierce is the director. Mark McArthur is pastor.

The Christian Motorcycle Association will conduct the 11 a.m. worship service at New Salem Church, Caledonia, on June 30. There



Sonshine Hands of Goss Church

will be a fellowship afterward. Sunday School starts at 9:45 a.m. Call (662) 356-4940.

Highland Church, Natchez, will celebrate its 50th anniversary on June 23. The event will begin with Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., with Fred Morris as guest speaker; lunch and afternoon testimonies and praise service led by The Gospel Echoes of Pearl. David McGuffee is pastor.

Country Woods Church, Byram, will present God and Country Day, 2-9:30 p.m., on July 4. Featured will be Ginny Owens, musician; David Garrard, magician; and the Annie Moses Band. For additional information, call the church at (601) 371-7955.

Oak Grove Church, Phoenix, Yazoo Association, new Sunday hours are Sunday School, 9 a.m.; worship, 10 a.m.; discipleship

training, 6:00; Sunday evening worship, 6:30 p.m.; and Wednesday service, 7:30 p.m. Darby Combs is pastor. For additional information, call the church at (662) 755-2250.



Ludlow Church Youth

CLASSIFIED ADS

RATE: 60 cents per word, minimum of ten words; maximum of fifty words. Cash with order except on contract advertising. Include name, address, zip code, and phone number in word count. No blind ads.

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NORRIS BOOKBINDING COMPANY, INC. - Old Bibles rebound, also church bulletins and hymnals. For more information call (662) 453-7424 or fax us at (662) 455-4743. Located at 107 North Stone Ave. Greenwood, MS 38930.

PARADISE LANES - Mississippi's only smoke and alcohol free Bowling Center. Call about lock-in, group rates, fund raisers, and leagues. Located at 820 Cooper Road, Jackson, MS (601) 372-7700

BLACKSBURG BAPTIST CHURCH, Blacksburg, VA seeks associate minister for music and worship. Send current resume with references and support materials before June 28 to Dr. Thomas R. McDearis, Blacksburg Baptist

Church, 550 North Main Street, Blacksburg, VA 24060 or e-mail to bhc@blacksburgbaptist.org.

HEIDELBERG STAINED GLASS, MERIDIAN, Design, Fabrication, Repair. Call 1-800-368-2705 or Fax illustrations to (601) 483-7958.

VACATION IN THE SMOKIES atop Bear Mountain, minutes from Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge, Dollywood, Outlet Malls, and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. GREYSTONE is the perfect cabin for families or honeymooners! Space for eight, fully furnished, satellite, TV/VCR, stone fireplace, wrap-a-round porch, with HOT TUB and beautiful views! Reserve GREYSTONE at (800) 636-1174. www.bearhollowcabins.com

WWW.GULFSHORECONDOS.COM - 4 night weekday special \$340 - 2 night weekend special \$180. Efficiency unit sleeps 4. Good through August 10. Call (205) 554-1524 or (251) 968-3222.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, CLANTON, ALA. is seeking a full-time minister of

music and education. All-age choir program, handbells, blended worship. Education/Administration responsibilities commensurate with experience. Call (205) 755-3840 or e-mail first-bc1@bellsouth.net to request full job description. Resume can be sent to Search Committee, FBC, 210 6th Street North, Clanton, AL 39045.

FOR SALE: HAMMOND C3 ORGAN with 122 RV Leslie speaker. Excellent condition. \$6,500. Call (601) 684-2131.

BRING EXCITEMENT, FUN & FELLOWSHIP to your next event with "Shoot for the Son" Ministries. We will bring a day of awesome paintball fun to you. For more information call (334) 514-0632 or e-mail: shootforthesonministries@hotmail.com

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BRANSON, MO, CONDO - Smoke-free; no pets; walk-in. Sleeps six; totally furnished - 2BD/2BA. Reduced rates; groups welcomed. Anniversary Specials. (662) 746-4632.

CHURCH FURNITURE FOR SALE: 69 pews of various lengths, communion table, pulpit, pulpit chairs. Available in September. Call First Baptist Church Winona, MS, (662) 283-4682.

TEXEX 1&3 AUDIO CASSETTE DUPLICATOR - totally rebuilt in 2001. I am retired and want to sell: \$400. Merle Fraser (662) 328-3709/ P.O. Box 2302, Columbus, MS 39704.

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ARE YOU FIGHTING CANCER? Please visit www.breastcancervictory.com or call (800) 850-6211.

CHOIR ROBES: 64 light-gray choir robes fair condition (16 have bell ringer sleeves). 2 stoles; white/turquoise reversing to burgundy and white with gold cross. \$35 each. 40 gray folders \$2 each. Call (601) 483-5497.

GROUPS FOR GREAT PASSION PLAY packages in Eureka Springs, Ark., (with tickets, lodging, recreation, and meals) see www.kellersresort.com or call (479) 253-8418.

Jesus Christ
Requests the Honor
of Your Presence
in Heaven!

YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!
Simply share the following prayer
with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (*I have sinned.*)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. (*I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.*)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

NAMES IN THE NEWS

An average of 25 kids recently participated in VBS at **Lowrey Memorial Church** in Tippah County. Pictured (from left, front row) are Andrew Wilson, Steven Rutledge, Kelly Turner, Samantha Irwin, Matt Barnes, Gracie Meyer, Jenna Newby, Steven Kennamore; (second row) Brittany Kennamore, Andrew Bain, Hannah Humphers, Brittany Lindsey; (third row) Blannon Frazier, Anna Sappington, Becky Robbins, Leanne Pope, Madeline Wilson, Misty Landers, Christina Carter; (fourth row) Krystal Mooney, Summer Mooney, Leanne Tanner, Elizabeth Johnson, and Bubba McDaniel.



VBS participants of Chesterfield Church, Ackerman

W. C. Dorris will be honored at a reception in recognition of his 50 years of service as deacon of Holly Bluff Church, Holly Bluff. The reception will be held June 30, 2-4 p.m., in the fellowship hall.



Lowrey Memorial Church VBS

at Forrest General Hospital in Hattiesburg, of congestive heart failure. Funeral services were held on May 4 at First Church. She is survived by her husband Troy, son Wesley Carter of Slidell, La., and daughter Kathy Guy of Jackson.



Earline Carter

Scotty W. Goldman, Philadelphia, received the doctor of ministry degree at Golden Gate Seminary on May 24. He is currently serving as associate at the Office of Collegiate and

Student Ministries, Alabama Baptist Convention.

Conner West, a member of First Church, Taylorsville, received the Sparky Award in the Awana Program on May 5. He is the 8-year-old son of Lane and Melissa West.



West



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS



VBS participants of Thrasher Church, Booneville

STAFF CHANGES



Richmond
Lynsol B. Richmond has called Thrasher Church, Booneville, has called **Lynsol B. Richmond** as pastor effective May 26. He previously served

Lenox Church, Dyersburg, Tenn.

Midway Church, Moss Point, has called **John S. Coggin** as interim pastor. He previously pastored churches in Jackson County and south Alabama. His last ministry was associate pastor/music at Hurley Church, Hurley.

Parkway Church, Tupelo, has called **Paul Brashier** as pastor. He received his education at Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary. His previous place of service was Clifton Church, Franklinton, La.

Raymond Road Church, Jackson, has called **Tommy Anthony**, a native of Jackson, as pastor effective June 1. Anthony received his education at Mississippi College, Southwestern Seminary, and George W. Truett Seminary. He has served as pastor of Live Oak Church, Gatesville, Texas, since 1995.

Thrasher Church, Booneville, held Vacation Bible School June 3-7, using the theme Faith Mountain. Lynsol B. Richmond is pastor. VBS directors were Sandy Johnson and Laci Huddleston.

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Mississippian elected to conference post

ST. LOUIS (EN) — Hal Kitchings, former pastor of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, was elected secretary of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference at the group's annual meeting June 9-10 in St. Louis prior to the start of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Kitchings announced just before the St. Louis meeting that he was resigning to accept the call to pastor First Church, Eustess, Fla.

The Pastor's Conference also celebrated America with a patriotic, flag-flying worship service June 10 at the America's Center in St. Louis.

"We will persevere, not because of our airmen and soldiers fighting, ...but because we have a country that is turning back to God and turning to prayer," exclaimed Lt. Col. Oliver North to participants in the 2002 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference.

North, a former aide in the Reagan White House who saw his criminal convictions overturned on appeal, was the featured speaker at the closing session of the June 9-10 event held in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

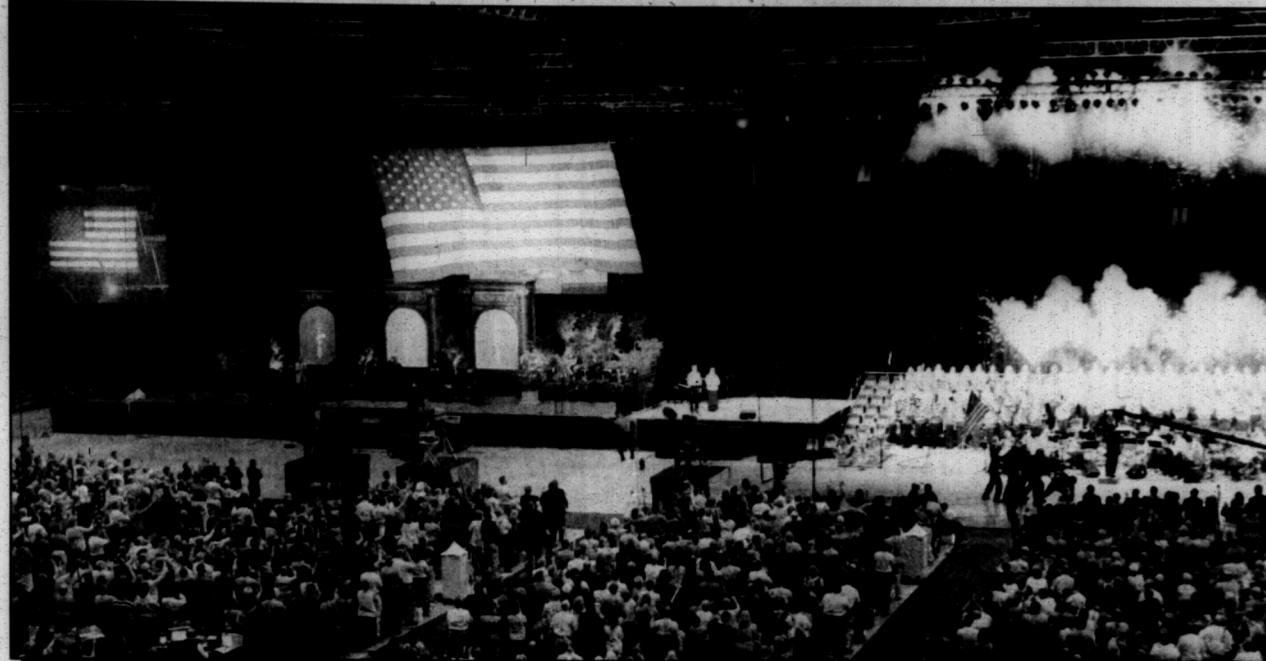
As flags flew, patriotic songs rang out from a 200-voice choir and cheers streamed from the crowd. The host of Baptists attending the patriotic event stood to their feet in celebration of their country.

Tears streamed from faces as the audience viewed a video of America's armed forces fighting in past wars. Participants joined in singing the anthems of each branch of the U.S. military.

The salute climaxed as an oversized American flag was lowered from the rafters, soldiers rappelled from above the crowd, and a small fireworks show brightly blazed.

In the afterglow of this patriotic salute, North addressed conference participants. He was one of several speakers, pastors, and evangelists taking part in the two-day meeting focused on the theme "Lest We Forget," based on Prov. 22:28.

Among conference speakers were well-known Southern



LET FREEDOM RING — During a standing ovation, the closing session of the annual Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference features a patriotic salute with music, pyrotechnics, and visuals. The Pastors' Conference was held June 9-10 prior to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in St. Louis' America's Center. (BP photo by Richard McCormack)

Baptist pastors Fred Luter of New Orleans; Jack Graham of Plano, Texas, who was later elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Jerry Vines of Jacksonville, Fla.; and Mac Brunson of Dallas; as well as Kentucky pastor Kevin Cosby, Florida Baptist Convention executive John Sullivan and evangelists Junior Hill and Jay Strack.

They were joined by musical guests Janet Paschal, Charles Billingsley, and others.

During the conference business session, Brunson, pastor of First Church, Dallas, was elected president of the 2003 Pastors' Conference.

He was nominated by Vines, pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, Fla.

Robert Pitman, pastor of Kirby Woods Church, Memphis, nominated his son, Vance Pitman, pastor of Hope Church, Las Vegas, Nev., for vice president.

Kitchings was nominated for

secretary by Ted Taylor, pastor of Olive Church, Pensacola, Fla.

In his address, North took messengers back to Sept. 11, the day America was changed forever. He said he, too, was aboard an airliner on that tragic morning. Like many, he turned to prayer and asked God to look down upon America.

Now, more than 200 days later, North told the audience they should not be fearful of terrorism because the United States is in good hands.

"Despite what the media reports, ...America ought not be afraid," he declared. "They say we should be afraid to gather in large crowds like we are tonight, but I've got news for the media: if you know where you are going, you should never be afraid to gather with fellow believers."

Speaking of a recent visit to Kandahar, Afghanistan, North told the Baptist pastors that God is at work among the troops fighting in the Middle East. Many of the troops are taking part in prayer times and seeking the counsel of chaplains, he reported.

Noting that many in the Middle East hate America, North said the United States will persevere. He reminded the pastors that Jesus also was hated by many, yet Jesus died and was raised again for the sins of all.



PREACHING TO PASTORS — Fred Luter, pastor of Franklin Avenue Church, New Orleans, preaches during the opening session of the annual Pastors' Conference, held June 9-10 in St. Louis' America's Center. (BP photo by Kent Harville)

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**R. Winders,
age 91, dies
June 3**

Ralph B. Winders Sr., 91, a native of Ecru, died June 3 at the Mississippi Baptist Medical

Center. Services were held June 7 at Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Jackson where he became a member in

July 1956 and served for 30 years as men's Sunday School teacher. Burial was in Cherry Creek cemetery near Ecru.

Winders served for 22 years as director of Student Work, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and retired May 1979. He also served as chaplain at the Mississippi Baptist Health Center from 1981 to 1991 and retired just after his 80th birthday.

Survivors are his wife of 61 years Mary Virginia Nourse Winders of Jackson; daughters, Winnie Sue Renta of Ridgecrest, Calif., and Mary Garnett Wilson of Orlando, Fla.; son Ralph Bishop Winders Jr. of Jackson; five grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

God Wants Me to persevere 1 Samuel 1:1-2,4-7,10-17, 19-20

By Ruth V. Gamble

Patience! Do you have patience? It is a fruit of the Spirit named in Galatians 5:22-23. My mother once told a visiting pastor not to pray for her to have patience because the Bible said that "tribulation worketh patience" and she'd already had enough tribulation! Indeed, this is often true. While waiting on God's timing to bring about his will in our lives we do experience difficulties -- tribulations, and hopefully, patience. It is this quality that God desires his people to possess, and it is almost always mentioned with accompanying trials.

The secular worldview calls for instant gratification, urging on us the acquisition of what is

"new," what we "deserve," insisting that we should have it now. Satisfying our desires as completely and quickly as possible is to be the goal.

Scripture gives us numerous examples of those who waited patiently before God's purpose was accomplished in their lives. This week we study the story of Samuel's mother, Hannah, as she waited and prayed repeatedly for a son. Consider these also: Job, facing tremendous losses of wealth, family, and health, yet saying, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him" (Job 15:13); Abraham waiting for God's promised heir, even though he was a hundred years old and Sarah was 90; Jacob working for 14 years to "earn"



Gamble

Rebekah as his wife (Genesis 29); Joseph, falsely accused, in prison for two years before rising to power in Egypt (Genesis 41:1); Moses' years in Midian keeping sheep before becoming Israel's great deliverer; David's years fleeing from Saul before rightfully becoming king; Paul's repeatedly praying for deliverance from his "thorn in his flesh," never being delivered from that affliction, being told by God, "My grace is sufficient for you" (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

The darkest period in Israel's history, the time of the judges, was coming to a close. Anarchy had prevailed as "every man did what was right in his own eyes." An Israelite, Elkanah, and his wife, Hannah, would have a son, Samuel, who would be used by God as the last of the judges, but also as prophet and priest. Elkanah had a second wife, Peninnah, who bore him children while Hannah was childless. Children, especially

sons, were seen as evidence of God's love and approval, while childlessness was viewed as divine disapproval or punishment. We are told that year after year Peninnah provoked and taunted Hannah because of her inability to have children. Showing great patience toward her "adversary," but in great anguish of soul Hannah went to the Temple to pray and weep before God. There she asked for a son, promising to "give him to the Lord all the days of his life."

It is also possible that Hannah took the vow of a Nazirite for Samuel as she promised "no razor will ever be used on his head" (1 Samuel 1:11 and Numbers 6:1-8). Her anguish in praying caused Eli, the priest, to think that she was drunk, and he confronted and chided her for that behavior. When Hannah explained her situation Eli assured her that God would grant her request. Hannah did have a son, naming him Samuel. We cannot be certain of the meaning of the name Samuel, but it sounds like the Hebrew

word meaning "heard of God." After she had weaned him (probably about the age of three), she fulfilled her vow by presenting the child to Eli, where Samuel would be trained and serve God in the Temple.

The Greek word for patience / perseverance includes such qualities as steadfastness, endurance, long-suffering, exhibiting fortitude, waiting without fretting, not being easily angered. We may expect adversity or times of waiting, but all the while we can be sure that God is developing in us a trust and dependence on him that we might not gain in any other way.

David seems to have summed up the need for patience -- for waiting on God -- when he wrote in Psalm 27:14, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

Gamble is a member of Slayden Church, Slayden.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Deepening Humility

2 Samuel 6:1-7:29

By Bart Walker

Often we hear others say something like "it doesn't matter what you believe, as long as you are sincere". Rarely does a passage of holy Scripture so openly rebuke such thinking as our focal passage for this week. In this passage (6:1-11) we are introduced to the holiness of God and his sincerity in requiring of us obedience to his ordinances and commands.

We begin with noting that the first two points of our lesson outline actually happen twice...there are two "Human Plans" and two "Divine Corrections." The first of these occurs in 2 Samuel 6 and is paralleled in greater detail in 1 Chronicles 13 & 15. This "Human Plan" is David's plan to transport the Ark, amid great celebration, by cart, from Kireath-jearim to Jerusalem. As the story relates, in the



Walker

process of moving, the cart on which the Ark is riding is upset by the cattle and Uzzah comes to the rescue and touches the Ark...leading to immediate death at the hand of God.

In 1 Chronicles 15 David explains at least three reasons for Uzzah's death. The first is found in 1 Chronicles 15:2, 13. David notes that it is the task of the Levites to carry the Ark, and that they did not carry it when Uzzah was killed (remember, it was transported upon a new cart). The second reason for Uzzah's death was the method of transport...the Ark was to be carried on poles (1 Chronicles 15:15) by the Levites so that it would not need to be touched by human hands. The third reason, as David explains, was that God had not been sought according to the ordinances. He had been

sought with sincerity, but not according to revealed truth, and the results were disastrous! God's first "Divine Correction" in this week's lesson is given in the death of Uzzah, and David repents of how he first handled the Ark and now handles the Ark according to the revealed Word of God.

God then blesses the trip and actually "helps" the Levites carry the Ark. We do not know what form this help came in, but they were so appreciative that they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams.

We might note here that Mical, David's wife, was offended that someone in the position of king of Israel would lower himself to being partially clad and dancing in the streets in the presence of the people. She rebuked David for his revealing clothing and dancing, but he replied that he might appear humiliated, but God had chosen David over her father Saul and David would therefore celebrate his God. There appeared to either be a breach in their relationship

from that time on, or a judgment from God, because Mical never gave birth to children.

We now come to the second "Human Plan." David compares his house of fine cedar to the tent of curtains where the Ark of God dwells. David seeks the counsel of Nathan the prophet. At first Nathan gives David permission to go ahead, but God then appears to Nathan and corrects Nathan and David, informing David through Nathan that God would raise a son up after David to build a house for him.

God gives several prophecies in his word to Nathan. He promises to establish David's house forever, to make David's name great, to appoint a place for the Israel where they will never be disturbed again that they may rest and to never take his lovingkindness from David's son.

David is humbled and responds in a prayer of praise and humility. His prayer has four parts. The first is David's praise for God's promise of the future...because he can predict and control the future. He alone is God! The second is praise for God's people,

Israel...that God has manifested himself through his mighty deeds of redemption among his people! The third is prayer that God may confirm his word spoken to David so that God's name may be magnified through him. The fourth is prayer asking God's blessing upon his household.

This week's lesson tells how man's plans, though quite sincere and even grounded in good intentions, are not always in agreement with the plans of God. We have also learned that man's ways of trying to worship or serve God are not acceptable unless performed according to his word.

In all of our ministry in church and home and society, are we serving God in a way that is in accordance with the Word of God or the desires of man...sometimes God may show up to tell us...sometimes in a tragedy to correct us...sometimes in a dream to redirect us...but we can always trust that what God does is good! Remember Romans 8:28!

Walker is pastor of Parkway Church, Natchez.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats,

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Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lit.

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Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of **The Village View** is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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Madge King recently retired from the Baptist Children's Village. Ms. King served more than 36 years in her ministry at the BCV.

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Resolutions introduced at St. Louis meeting

ST. LOUIS (EN) — Resolutions adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) during their June 11-12 annual meeting spoke to contemporary issues such as the war on terrorism, peace in the Middle East, the sexual integrity of ministers, and opposition to partial-birth abortion.

Rick Reeder, a messenger from Princeton, Ky., made a motion from the floor that the convention go on record this year encouraging President Bush and the U.S. Congress to make the ban on partial-birth abortion a high priority. He noted that a presidential veto was unlikely from Bush, making the passage of such legislation timely.

A two-thirds majority was required for consideration of resolutions proposed directly from the floor outside the committee process — a rarity at SBC meetings — but this one easily passed with an overwhelmingly affirmative vote.

The resolution on terrorism states that Southern Baptists "wholeheartedly support the actions of the United States government, its intelligence agencies, and its military in the just war against the terrorist networks."

Meanwhile, a related resolution supports continuing prayer for peace in the Middle East. Specifically, it supports the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign state, denounces revenge, and holds Israel accountable to the same standards of national righteousness as any other nation.

All spiritual leaders are urged to hold one another accountable to the highest standards of Christian moral practice, according to another resolution. It urges all religious bodies and local churches to rid their ranks of predatory ministers and discipline those guilty of any sexual abuse.

The convention went on record as being unable to commend the Today's New International Version (TNIV) of the Bible, published recently by Zondervan. The resolution requests agencies, boards, and publishing arms of the SBC to refrain from using this translation.

A resolution concerning the sufficiency of Scripture in a therapeutic culture states: "We affirm that there are real conditions that warrant legitimate medical treatment, but we reject the assumptions of the therapeutic culture that offer a pharmacological solution for every human problem. ... We call on Southern Baptists to reclaim practical biblical wisdom, Christ centered counseling, and the restorative ministry of the care and cure of souls."

The high vacancy rate of judges in the federal system was addressed in a resolution calling on the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee to give a fair hearing and timely decisions on nominees presented by the president.

The martyrdom of New Tribes missionary Martin Burnham was addressed in a resolution that "grieved the loss of our brother in Christ..."

Southern Baptists were encouraged to redouble their commitment to pray for Southern Baptist missionaries "who daily offer their lives in service to God and his Son, Jesus Christ."

Messengers rejected a motion from the floor to consider an additional resolution in condemnation of Freemasonry as an organization opposed to Christianity. The resolutions committee said this subject had been addressed previously and the wording of the proposed resolution was confusing.

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SECO EWPS PGGH UG,
SECO EWPS QGRYGIJA:
QRGPPGA WDG SECT
SEWS EWJG HCS PGGH,
WHA TGS EWJG
QGRYGIJA.
NCEH SLGHST:SLGHST-
HYHG

Clue: N=

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: "Proverbs Twenty-Seven:One."

COSBE elects Mississippian



Newly elected officers of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists (COSBE) are (front row, from left) Benny Jackson, vice president, of Germantown, Tenn.; Jim McNeil, president, of St. Louis; (back row, from left) Marion Warren, music director, Oklahoma; Steve Walker, assistant music director, of Pinola, Miss.; Phil Glisson, parliamentarian, of Memphis; and Todd Brady, pastor advisor, of Fayetteville, N.C. Officers were elected as COSBE met June 9-10 at St. Louis' Cervantes Convention Center prior to the 145th session of the Southern Baptist Convention. (BP photo by Sandy King)

Council seeking to strengthen 'kingdom families'

ST. LOUIS (EN) — Pledging to strengthen "kingdom families," the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Council on

Family Life highlighted plans for a Kingdom Families Rally in conjunction with next year's SBC annual meeting in Phoenix.

The council, chaired by former SBC President Tom Elliff, was created during the 2000 SBC annual meeting. The nine-member group includes Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

The group has spent the past two years developing a strategy to address moral and spiritual issues facing today's families.

"Something terrible is happening to families in America," said Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla., and a former SBC president.

Citing a number of examples of family crises, Elliff said statistics indicate 88% of the children who grow up in evangelical church-

es leave the church by age 18. He listed pornography, financial struggles, and lack of meaningful conversation between parents and children as other problems plaguing the family.

A divorce rate among church members similar to that of unchurched people is another sign of family crisis, Elliff noted. He said the number of divorces in the nation impacts an estimated one million children a year.

Emphasizing the need for effective premarital counseling, Elliff warned pastors against performing weddings for couples who "don't meet the biblical requirements for marriage."

Pastors who do so, he added, "have forfeited not only your conscience but your calling, and you've forfeited your privilege to minister to them at all."

"It's time for us to save the family," Elliff told messengers. "It's time to build kingdom families. Let's come home to the heart of God."

That can be accomplished, he said, through a strategy to be unveiled next year. He described it as "a simple and time-honored ministry for virtually divorce-proofing the families in your church."

In addition to an emphasis on premarital counseling, he

said the strategy will call for Southern Baptists "to set aside at least one night every week where families listen to one another and to God."

The Kingdom Families Rally will be a two-hour event June 19, 2003. Scheduled speakers include Elliff; Gary Chapman, author of *The Five Love Languages*; and Dennis and Barbara Rainey of *FamilyLife Today*.

James and Shirley Dobson of Focus on the Family and author Beth Moore, president of Living Proof Ministries, will address the rally via satellite.

In addition to the Council on Family Life report, Executive Committee proposals approved by messengers include:

- A 2002-03 Cooperative Program (CP) allocation budget of \$176.9 million, a decrease of more than \$1.3 million from the current year. The decrease mirrors a \$1.3 million drop in CP giving during the 2000-01 fiscal year. Designated giving, however, grew by \$6.8 million last year.

- A 2002-03 SBC operating budget of \$7,305,652, including \$5.87 million from the Cooperative Program. The budget is an increase of more than \$200,000 from the current year but a decrease of nearly \$45,000 from CP gifts.

Church staffers honored



Wayne Ward (second from left), minister of education at First Church, Columbia, and Bernie Parker, minister of music at the church, were recently recognized by the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) for 25 years each of service to the church. S.A. "Sonny" Adkins (right), MBCB evangelism director, and Don Lum (left), evangelism department consultant, were on hand to congratulate the pair at the Baptist Building in Jackson. Adkins attended William Carey College with Ward and Parker, while Lum served with them on the staff of First Church, Columbia. Ward has served Southern Baptist churches for a total of 44 years, while Parker has served Southern Baptist churches for 42 years. (BR photo)